

IN BRIEF

State discloses new virus cases at local schools

The Oregon Health Authority has disclosed eight new coronavirus cases at schools in Clatsop County. Four of the virus cases were students in the Astoria School District, according to the health authority’s weekly outbreak report. Two were from Lewis and Clark Elementary School, one was from Astoria High School and one was from Astor Elementary School. The remaining four virus cases were students in the Warrenton-Hammond School District. Three were from Warrenton High School and one was from Warrenton Grade School. The state has reported a few dozen virus cases among students and staff in schools since in-person classes resumed this school year.

Public forums planned on county redistricting

Virtual public forums focused on how Clatsop County should remap its five districts will take place over the next couple of weeks. The scheduled dates: • 3 p.m., Tuesday • Noon, Wednesday • 5:30 p.m., Thursday • 11 a.m., Friday • 4 p.m., Oct. 18

Once local data from the census is released, the county must take another look at its district boundaries. The districts, each represented by a county commissioner, should have roughly the same population total. The new boundaries must be remapped and finalized six months or more before the next countywide election in May. To take part in the forums, visit: <https://www.oregonskitchentable.org/page/clatsop-county-county-commissioner-redistricting>

Police investigate reported threat of school shooting in Seaside

SEASIDE — Police received a report of a possible shooting threat made by a student at Seaside High School on Wednesday. Upon investigation, police confirmed there was an incident involving a student making derogatory statements. The investigation is ongoing.

— The Astorian

Governor seeks federal disaster relief for struggling commercial salmon industry

Gov. Kate Brown is asking the federal government for disaster relief for the state’s struggling commercial salmon industry. The governor submitted the formal aid request Monday to the U.S. Department of Commerce. In her letter, Brown said the economic return from commercial salmon fishing along most of the coast since 2018 has been less than one-third of what it was in prior years. This continuing trend, she said, is having severe effects on already distressed rural communities and businesses that depend on salmon. Brown said salmon are a vital component for the state’s natural resources and provide significant commercial, recreational, economic and aesthetic benefits.

— Oregon Public Broadcasting

DEATH

Oct. 7, 2021

GIBSON, Ronald Edward, 76, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Caldwell’s Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

Attempted assault • Johnny Valencia, 38, of Seaside, was arrested on Monday at Marlin Avenue Coin Laundry in Warrenton for attempted assault in the fourth degree, harassment, improper use of 911 and menacing. **DUII** • Preston Scott Luoto, 27, of Seaside, was arrested on Oct. 2 at Commercial and 14th streets in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants and reckless driving. • Michael Franklin May, 59, of Coweta, Oklahoma, was arrested on Oct. 1 on Marine Drive in Astoria for DUII.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
TUESDAY
Clatsop County Planning Commission, 10 a.m., (electronic meeting).
Gearhart City Council, 6 p.m., special meeting on contractor hours, (electronic meeting).
Warrenton City Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.
Clatsop Community College Board, 6:30 p.m., (electronic meeting).

theAstorian

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People gathered in Astoria on Oct. 2 for a demonstration to protect reproductive rights. Thomas Giles

Couple who died after boat capsized identified

By ERICK BENDEL The Astorian

A married couple from Astoria died Sunday when their boat capsized and ran aground on Nedonna Beach near Rockaway Beach. Allen Payne, 79, and Shirley Payne, 76, set sail from Astoria in the early morning hours, their son told the Tillamook County Sheriff’s Office. The Paynes kept their vessel, a 42-foot pleasure boat named Bagheera, at an Astoria pier. They were heading

Tillamook County Sheriff’s Office

Two people died after a sailboat capsized Sunday at Nedonna Beach.

toward San Francisco, according to the initial report. Around 7 p.m. that night, witnesses reported the boat

Allen Payne was found tangled in rope outside the boat, near the propeller, deceased. They were the only people known to be onboard. The sheriff’s office does not suspect foul play, but the investigation is ongoing, the agency said. The waters just south of the south Nehalem jetty are known to be treacherous, Paul Fournier, an investigator and public information officer with the sheriff’s office, said. Over the years, several boating accidents have occurred in the area.

New multimedia journalist hired at The Astorian

Ely to focus on visual storytelling

By ERICK BENDEL The Astorian

At 23, Lydia Ely, The Astorian’s new photographer and videographer, has built a formidable portfolio. Ely has photographed fashion in New York City and covered small-town life in mountainous Montana. She has turned her lens on protests and politics, including then-U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris and U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren when they passed through Ely’s hometown of Seattle during their 2020 presidential runs. She’s shot concerts and portraits and college sports.

Lydia Ely

Ely got started in photojournalism at her college paper, The Daily of the University of Washington, where she rose from sports photographer to photo editor. In her role, she pushed to get more women sports photographers on staff. “There are now a bunch there, which is really awesome,” she said. She came to the craft almost reluctantly. Because her father worked as a freelance videographer, she initially fought the urge to join the profession — a part of her may have been quietly rebelling. “I was really loving sports photography, and I wasn’t really allowing myself to tell myself that I loved it,” she said.

Then, at UW’s final football game in Las Vegas in 2019, she found herself chatting with an ESPN photographer who basically told her he would help her get a job if she wanted. “And I was like, ‘Oh, no, I’m not going to be doing journalism or photography,’” she said. But “it kind of got the wheels turning, and I was like, ‘Maybe I could do this.’” Ely thought she would go into electoral politics. She double majored in political science and communications and minored in UW’s Law, Societies & Justice program. In college she worked for a few local campaigns, volunteered for others and interned at a political consulting firm. “And then I got to this point where I was so sick of thinking that I was right all the time, and you kind of have to be that way in politics,” she said. She discovered that she enjoyed coming to conversations from a more neutral place, listening to other people’s thoughts and opinions. At her last paper, The Livingston Enterprise in Montana, she became familiar with the variety of issues that community journalism covers — for example, the addition of a controversial railroad crossing that would affect daily traffic, how the town grew, and what the population would be — “little things that could seem small but have a really big impact on people’s lives.”

The Astorian hires new business reporter

McDonald will cover tourism on the coast

By ETHAN MYERS The Astorian

Although she always enjoyed writing, Abbey McDonald’s career interests were unclear to her until a professor recommended journalism. “(She) was like, ‘You get to wear different hats every day. Like if you want to be a veterinarian, you can just talk to your veterinarian, you get it out of your system, and you do something else the next day,’” McDonald said. She soon settled on a double major of journalism and anthropology at the University of Oregon, where she graduated in June. She also graduated from the Robert D. Clark Honors College. Since her commitment to the career, journalism has taken her to several places across Oregon. Now, it will settle her in Astoria. McDonald will be covering business and tourism for The Astorian. Through her work in business and its many intersections with other topics, she will also be contributing as a lead reporter for the Coast River Business Journal. She interned at the Willamette Week in Portland and The News-Review

in Roseburg, where she was the paper’s Snowden intern. This past summer, she worked for the Malheur Enterprise in Vale, where she did reporting on construction and the coronavirus pandemic. Due to her experience in small towns, McDonald appreciates the purpose that a newspaper plays in a tight-knit community. “I just really love that you start to get to know people and you feel like your reporting really has an impact more so than a big paper,” she said. In a place like Astoria, McDonald thinks journalism can play a unique role of being informative while keeping people in the community connected. “It’s easy to feel like you’re not a part of your community, but then when you get to read the newspaper, and you see the stories about your neighbors or people you know, and you might run into them later and be like, ‘Oh, I know a little bit about you,’” she said. “So I think it just curates empathy.” While at The Astorian, McDonald hopes to sharpen her writing skills while also producing enjoyable content. With interests in impactful topics like homelessness, gender and mental health, she hopes to work toward long-form writing in the future.

Abbey McDonald

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